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FM AMEMBASSY HARARE

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RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 HARARE 000411

SIPDIS

AF/S FOR B. WALCH

ADDIS ABABA FOR USAU

ADDIS ABABA FOR ACSS

NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR MICHELLE GAVIN

TREASURY FOR D. PETERS

STATE PASS TO USAID FOR LDOBBINS AND JHARMON

COMMERCE FOR BECKY ERKUL

E.O.12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: ZIM NOTES 05-15-09

SUMMARY - Topics of the week

- Tsvangirai Launches Next 100 Day Plan
- MDC-M Suspends Three MPs from Party
- While an MDC-T MP is Convicted for Inciting Violence
- Media Conference Wraps Up; Journalists Arrested
- Abductees Released, Prominent Lawyer Arrested
- Late Rains Lead to Better Than Expected Crops
- Government Warns of Trafficking
- Wheat and Barley Output Set to Fall
- LonZim Paid Too Much for Zimbabwean Investments
- Former President of the CFU Elected to a Continental Body
- Kingdom Meikles Saga Nearing an End
- Quote of the Week

On the Political/Social Front

[¶1.](#) Tsvangirai Launches Next 100 Day Plan... Having just about completed the first 100 days of the unity government, Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai hosted a conference in Harare to lay out his plans and goals for the next 100. The plan groups the 32 ministries into five clusters (Economic, Infrastructure, Social, Rights and Interest, and Security) each of which is led by a minister. While the reform and capacity building objectives are laudable, the financial means to execute them are lacking. Also, ZANU-PF doesn't appear to support the initiatives as two of the three ZANU-PF ministers who lead clusters failed to show.

[¶2.](#) MDC-M Suspends Three MPs from Party... MDC-M President and Deputy Prime Minister, Arthur Mutambara, along with other top party leaders suspended six party officials on May 8 for bringing the party into disrepute. The six suspended members include the following three Matabeleland MPs: Abdenico Bhebhe of Nkayi South, Norman Mpofu of Bulilima East, and Njabuliso Mguni of Lupane East. All six targeted officials had been highly critical of Mutambara's

leadership, charging him with aligning himself too closely with ZANU-PF. See Harare 402. Two other MPs, Maxwell Dube of Tsholotsho South and Thandeko Mkandla of Gwanda North, were subsequently summoned to face charges of misconduct likely also related to criticism of Mutambara.

¶3. While an MDC-T MP is Convicted for Inciting Violence... Chipinge East MP Matewu Mathias Mlambo was slapped with a 10 month jail sentence by a Chipinge magistrate for inciting violence at the funeral of an MDC member who died recently in his constituency. Mlambo was first arrested last month following a clash between ZANU-PF and MDC-T supporters at the funeral in Chipinge. The MDC-T also reported that its MP for Chipinge South, Meki Makuyana, who is also facing charges of inciting violence during the run-up to the June 2008 presidential run-off election, had his ruling set for May 27 by the same magistrate.

¶4. Media Conference Wraps Up; Journalists Arrested... With only about half of the expected participants present as most independent journalists boycotted, results from the QAll Stakeholders Media Qjournalists boycotted, results from the QAll Stakeholders Media ConferenceQ continue to emerge. Although some in government portrayed the historic conference as a significant achievement, others criticized the draft recommendations as Qcosmetic.Q On Monday, The Zimbabwe IndependentQs editor and news editor were arrested for Qcommunicating falsehoods with the intention of undermining public confidence in security forces.Q The arrests were made in connection with last weekQs story on police involvement in abductions, which we reported on in Zim Notes last week. According to this weekQs Zimbabwe Independent, neither co-Minister of Home Affairs Giles Mutsekwa (MDC-T) nor Police Commissioner-General

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Augustine Chihuri knew in advance about the journalistsQ arrest, which was reportedly ordered by Attorney General Johannes Tomana. See Harare 395.

¶5. Abductees Released, Prominent Lawyer Arrested... Less than 24 hours after securing the bail for three men who were abducted last year and face accusations of bombing police stations, Human Rights lawyer Alec Muchadehama was arrested on May 14 and charged with obstructing justice when he allegedly conspired with a court clerk to secure the menQs release last month. See Harare 401.

¶6. Late Rains Lead to Better Than Expected Crops... The Food and Agriculture Organization/World Food Program/GOZ Crop and Food Security Assessment (CFSAM) teams completed their field work this week on May 11. USAID, as observers, joined two of the four teams and visited three provinces and numerous districts and wards. In these three provinces, the general consensus was that the crop and food security situation was much better than last year. The extended rains have helped the late-planted crops. Though the harvest is better than last year, it is still about half the historical average and there are numerous areas that had harvests that were worse than last year.

¶7. Government Warns of Trafficking... This week, the Minister of Labor issued a warning to young Zimbabweans to consult widely before migrating to other countries to avoid being caught up in human trafficking syndicates. In a speech delivered at a local school, the ministry acknowledged that young girls are at risk of trafficking by agents offering false promises. There are no known statistics on the extent of human trafficking in Zimbabwe.

Economic and Business News

¶8. Wheat and Barley Output Set to Fall... According to the Commercial Farmers Union (CFU), time for making sufficient preparations to enable the production of a decent sized wheat and barley crop for 2009 is running out. The CFU believes that there has to be a moratorium on current farm disruptions in order to restore the confidence of productive farmers. The current disruptions will also negatively affect the summer crops.

¶9. LonZim Paid Too Much for Zimbabwean Investments... An analyst at the private financial news source, Zfn, believes that the UK-listed investor, LonZim, overpaid for its purchase of Zimbabwean-based Celsys, Millpal Chemicals, and Leopard Rock Hotel. According to the analyst, AMB Capital of South Africa (which owns 20.7 percent of LonZim) and Damille Partners IV (which owns 6.3 percent) have now woken up to the fact that the investments were overvalued.

¶10. Former President of the CFU Elected to a Continental Body... Doug Taylor-Freeme was elected vice president of the African Committee at the International Federation of Agricultural Producers at a meeting held in Kenya recently. Despite his new position, he lost a meeting held in Kenya recently. Despite his new position, he is still being forced off his farm in Chinhoyi, about 100 km north of Harare, under the current wave of farm seizures.

¶11. Kingdom Meikles Saga Nearing an End... Shareholders have been informed that they will soon receive a cautionary notice for an extraordinary general meeting to be held in the next 21 days at which shareholders will be asked to vote on a motion to demerge the group into Kingdom and Meikles. The Financial Gazette of May 14 reported that Strive Masiyiwa is likely to support the motion.

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¶12. Quote of the Week:

I have asked the Commissioner-General (Chihuri) to reduce this to writing so I can take it up with my colleague in the Ministry of Justice (Patrick Chinamasa). I want to reiterate that it is not my ministry's policy and I am also completely disgusted that this took place.

Q Co-Minister of Home Affairs Giles Mutsekwa addressing the House of Assembly on the arrest of lawyer Alec Muchadehama on May 14.

MCGEE